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AUTHOR Gordon, Edmund W.
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The aim of this paper is to bring some conceptual synthesis to the deliberations of the conference, "What Do We Know About Teaching and Learning in Urban Schools?". The author begins with an attempt to define the concept of urban education, and continues with an identification of some of the critical issues related to urban life and education in urban settings. The tendency to equate urban education with the education of minority groups or with the education of the underclasses is critiqued. Also discussed are the trend toward urbanization, the educability of all people, cultural pluralism, temperament, sex and gender differences, language, testing, educational finance, and resource utilization. (Author/RLV)

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WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT TEACHING AND LEARNING IN URBAN SCHOOLS?

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Volume 14

What Do We Know About Teaching and Learning in Urban Schools: A Summary of the Conference Findings

Edmund W. Gordon
Columbia University

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Paper prepared for the National Conference on Urban Education, held in St. Louis, Missouri, July 10-14, 1978.
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Acknowledgments

The Urban Education Program, CEMREL, Inc., would like to thank the National Institute of Education and the Regional Joint Planning Group of the Urban Education Program for its support and assistance in planning the conference.

Conference Chairperson

Harriet Doss Willis
Director
Urban Education Program

Conference Participants

Nettie S. Ammer
Research Associate
St. Louis University

Eva Baker
Director
Center for the Study of Evaluation
UCLA Graduate School of Education

Carrie E. Bash
Division of Community Programs
Urban League of St. Louis

Isabel Beck
Co-director
Language & Communications Unit
Learning Research and Development Center
University of Pittsburgh

Janet Cheatham Bell
Urban/Ethnic Studies Coordinator
Indiana Department of Public Instruction

David Bennett
Deputy Superintendent
Milwaukee Public Schools

Edward Binkley
Director of Research & Evaluation
Metro Schools
Nashville, Tennessee

Milton Bins
Senior Associate
Policy Development
The Council of Great City Schools
Washington, D.C.

Dean Bowles
Director
Home-School-Community Project
Wisconsin Research and Development Center

Ronald A. Boyd
Associate Superintendent
Department of Education
State of Indiana

Emerson Brown
Board of Directors
CEMREL, Inc.

L.D. Buford
Principal
St. Louis Public Schools

William D. Callian, Jr.
Assistant Superintendent
Curriculum Instruction
Memphis City Schools

Angeline P. Caruso
Associate Superintendent
Department of Curriculum &
Instructional Services
Board of Education
City of Chicago

Courtney Cazden
School of Education
Harvard University

Ned Chalker
Teaching & Learning Program
National Institute of Education

Francis S. Chase
Director of Urban Education
Dallas, Texas

Rosemary Christensen
Director of Indian Education
Minneapolis Public Schools

Doris J. Clemons
Region Five Office
Detroit Board of Education
Detroit, Michigan

Frances Coe
Board of Directors
CEMREL, Inc.

David Colton
Graduate Institute of Education
Washington University
St. Louis, Missouri

Lloyd M. Cooke
Vice Chairman
Economic Development Council of
New York City

Dallas Daniels
Director
Equal Employment Opportunity
Indianapolis Department of Public
Instruction

A. W. Dirks
Director
Research, Planning & Development
Wichita Public Schools

Lorenza Dixon
Curriculum Coordinator
Indianapolis Public Schools

John W. Dobbs
Assistant Superintendent
School & Community Affairs
Department of Education
State of Michigan

Domingo Dominguez
Director
Bilingual & Migrant Program
Southwest Educational Development
Laboratory

Ronald Edmonds
Director
Center for Urban Studies
Graduate School of Education
Harvard University

Nancy Evers
Department of Educational
Administration
University of Cincinnati

Joseph L. Felix
Director
Program Evaluation
Cincinnati Public Schools

Marian Kilbane-Flash
Supervisor
Research & Development
Cleveland Public Schools

Anita Ford
Co-chairman
Citizens Education Task Force
St. Louis, Missouri

Ruges R. Freeman
Coordinator
Secondary Student Training
Southern Illinois University
Edwardsville, Illinois

Gary Gappert
New Jersey Department of Education

Booker Gardner
Wisconsin Research & Development
Center for Individualized Schooling
Madison, Wisconsin

Howard Gholson
Policy Analysis
Title I
U.S. Office of Education

Henry Givens
Assistant Commissioner
Department of Elementary &
Secondary Education
State of Missouri

Edmund Gordon
Director
Institute for Urban &
Minorities Education
Teachers College
Columbia University

Milton Goldberg
Educational Organizations &
Institutions
National Institute of Education

John H. Grate
Director
Planning & Development
Cincinnati Public Schools

Eldon Grossner
Manager
LEA Services
Illinois Office of Education

Rex Hagans
Northwest Regional Educational
Laboratory

Robert J. Havighurst
Department of Education
The University of Chicago

Garland M. Hawkins
Director
Music Education
Curriculum Center School Dist. 189
East St. Louis, Illinois

Paul Hill
The Rand Corporation

Keith Hyde
Planning & Development
Des Moines Public Schools

John Ingram
Wisconsin Research & Development
Center for Individualized Schooling

Barbara Jackson
Associate Dean
Department of Administration &
Supervision
School of Education
Atlanta University

James N. Jacobs
Superintendent
Cincinnati Public Schools

Sylvia K. Jones
State & Federal Grants
Toledo Public Schools

Preston C. Kronkosky
Field Services & Dissemination
Southwest Educational Development
Laboratory

Daniel U. Levine
Director
Center for the Study of
Metropolitan Problems
in Education
University of Missouri-Kansas City

Joseph D. Liggins
Assistant Superintendent for Staff Development
Houston Independent School District

Reece Little
Director of Curriculum Development
Jefferson County Public Schools
Louisville, Kentucky

Irene Lober
Superintendent
University City Public Schools
St. Louis, Missouri

William Lobosco
ESEA Title I
U.S. Office of Education

Catherine Lyon
Center for the Study of Evaluation
UCLA Graduate School of Education

Mary Meehan
District Coordinator
The School District of Kansas City

LaMar Miller
Director of Secondary Education
New York University

Len Nachman
Division of Planning & Development
Minnesota Department of Education

Tom Odneal
Director
Title IV
Missouri Department of Education

Joan Orender
Project Coordinator for Distribution of Information
Nebraska Department of Education

George A. Parry
George A. Parry & Associates
River Forest, Illinois

William Phillips
Minneapolis Public Schools

Andrew C. Porter
Institute for Research on Teaching
College of Education
Michigan State University

Electra Price
Oakland Unified School District
Oakland, California

Walter E. Richardson
Supervisor
Compensatory Instruction
Columbus Public Schools

J. Robert Sampson
Assistant Manager
Program Planning & Development
Illinois Office of Education

Judah L. Schwartz
Professor of Engineering, Science and Education
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Cleona Shortridge
St. Louis Public Schools

Barbara Shull
Conference on Education
St. Louis, Missouri

Edward E. Smith
Right to Read Effort
Washington, D.C.

Douglas Smith
Administrative Assistant to the Governor
State of Michigan

Frank Sobol
Basic Skills Group
National Institute of Education

George Spicely
U.S. Office of Education

Jane Stallings
Stanford Research Institute

Tom Stefonek
Director of Planning & Evaluation Research
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Vera John-Steiner
Department of Educational Foundations
College of Education
The University of New Mexico

Ronald Stodghill
Associate Superintendent
St. Louis Public Schools

Marilyn Suydam
ERIC Information Analysis Center for Science, Math & Environmental Education
The Ohio State University

Maud Thomas
U.S. Office of Education
Kansas City Regional Office

Concepcion Valadez
Graduate School of Education
University of California
Los Angeles

Mamie Wandick
Program Officer
U.S. Office of Education
Kansas City Regional Office

Phyllis Weaver
School of Education
Harvard University

Billy-Belle Weber
Weber, Fuhrmann & Associates
East St. Louis, Illinois

Joyce Weddington
Director
Research and Evaluation
Memphis City Schools

Rachel T. Weddington
University Dean for Teacher Education
The City University of New York

Lores Wells
Harris Teachers College
St. Louis, Missouri

Robert Wentz
Superintendent
St. Louis Public Schools

Barbara Woods
Afro-American Studies
St. Louis University

Saul Yanofsky
National Institute of Education

Savannah M. Young
St. Louis Public Schools

Allen F. Zondlak
Director of Planning
Detroit Public Schools

URBAN EDUCATION PROGRAM STAFF

John Bass
Resource Coordinator

Alfreda Brown
Resource Specialist

Pamelia Coe
Research Associate

Eileen Hamilton
Secretary

Nellie H. Harrison
Dissemination-Curriculum Specialist

Donald Miller
Research Advisor

Harriet Doss Willis
Director

Astacia Wright
Research Assistant

STAFF FOR WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT TEACHING AND LEARNING IN URBAN SCHOOLS?

Harriet Doss Willis
Editor

Margaret Solomon
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Foreword

This monograph is one of a series of papers on the issues of instruction and learning in urban schools that were presented at a conference held July 10-14, 1978, in St. Louis, Missouri, sponsored by the Urban Education Program, CEMREL, Inc., and supported by the National Institute of Education. It is our hope that both the conference and the series of fourteen monographs that resulted from it will assist educational researchers and school practitioners in identifying and analyzing instructional and learning problems in urban school settings, and will contribute to the development of strategies for the improvement of schooling for students.

Titled "What Do We Know About Teaching and Learning in Urban Schools?", the 1978 conference focused on an examination of research findings on the teaching-learning process in areas most germaine to and under control of the schools. The key problems to which the papers are addressed are the assessment of learning outcomes and the analysis of the relationships between instructional and other inputs and learning outcomes. Important contextual issues not under the full control of schools, such as community and parental involvement and the impact of federal and state governments in improving educational opportunities, were addressed at the conference as well.

The conference was conceived, in part, as an initial step in the development of a state-of-the-art review of the most critical issues faced by educators in urban schools who struggle with the morass of general educational problems, exacerbated by decreasing public confidence in large city schools, declining student enrollment, and increasing numbers of poor and minority students. While the conference does not exhaust discussion of the problems

that are particularly significant in the urban school setting, it forms a convenient focus for viewing the larger issues affecting education in our cities.

The educational innovation and change growing out of more than ten years of effort since the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 -- the primary stimulus for federal support of research and development in education -- has had the least impact on the student populations typical of the urban school setting. With this concern as a primary consideration, ten months prior to convening the conference, CEMREL's Urban Education Program had begun work with a network of twenty big-city school districts and state departments of education in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, Tennessee, and Wisconsin. Thus, the conference and the research findings of national authorities was undertaken to lay a foundation for future work in urban educational research and development and to undergird present efforts at improvement of schools in the region.

The Conference Design

To guide the development of the presenters' preparation of their papers, topical questions were prepared for them by Urban Education Program Staff and a paper format was recommended. Each presenter prepared a full paper based on the topical questions and results were summarized by the writers during general sessions of the conference. Because of a wide range of perspectives held on the conference issues, discussions precipitated by reactor panels composed of other prominent researchers, practitioners, and community leaders in education followed each general conference session. More than one hundred educational researchers and practitioners from across the country attended the conference. The invited participants came from school districts and state departments of education from nineteen states; thirteen institutions of higher education; four federal agencies; numerous educational laboratories and research and development centers; and seven social service agencies.

The conference was divided into two types of sessions: general sessions, wherein the nationally recognized speakers who wrote papers presented their summaries; and forum sessions, wherein reactors helped analyze the presentations and examine the concrete recommendations put forth by the general-session speakers. All participants were encouraged to present questions and reactions during these forum sessions.

Francis S. Chase, Director of Urban Education Studies, Dallas, Texas, gave the keynote address at the opening session of the conference, a banquet on Monday evening, July 10. His topic, "Promising Developments in Urban Education," summarized field studies that he was conducting under sponsorship of the Council of Great Cities Schools and the University Council for Educational Administration under a grant from the Spencer Foundation. Chase is Professor Emeritus of the University of Chicago, where he also served as Chairman and Dean of Education for ten years.

The Conference Topics

Each of the presenters had been asked to design a paper by responding to salient topical questions, drawn up by CEMREL's Urban Education Staff. The questions that were posed originally for each of the writers are presented below. Most of the resulting papers were developed into monographs for this series.

Compensatory Education: A Congressional Perspective Christopher T. Cross Minority Staff Director Committee on Education and Labor U.S. House of Representatives.	What is the current state of the evidence concerning projected changes in legislative mandates, and what may we expect related to changes in policy governing federally funded compensatory education programs?

Effective Teacher-Support Systems to Improve Instructional Conditions in Schools Joseph D. Liggins Assistant Superintendent for Staff Development Houston Independent School District	What teacher support systems are most effective in improving instructional conditions for students? What is the role of in-service training, and what types of in-service training can be recommended to urban educators? What other resources--such as additional curricular materials, support from teacher aides and volunteers, time re-allocations, team teaching arrangements, etc.--can be demonstrated to be effective in improving students' learning opportunities? What is the state of the evidence?
Assessment That Respects Complexity in Individuals and Programs Judah L. Schwartz Professor of Engineering, Science and Education Massachusetts Institute of Technology	How can we best measure and analyze the effects of instruction on students' learning in the major school subjects: What are the most appropriate times and strategies for measuring the effects of schooling on student learning? What do we learn from means of assessment other than standardized achievement testing? When and under what circumstances is it most appropriate to use alternative or complementary strategies for assessing program effectiveness?
Achievement Tests in Urban Schools: New Numbers Eva Baker Director Center for the Study of Evaluation University of California, Los Angeles	How can we best measure and analyze the effects of instruction on students' learning in the major school subjects? What are the most appropriate times to measure the effects of schooling on student learning? What are the cautions which should be taken into account before any attempt to evaluate the effectiveness of programs primarily on the basis on standardized achievement data, especially when the number of individual implementations is large and the actual conditions under which the implementations took place are not well documented?
Summer Drop-off and The Effectiveness of Compensatory Instruction Paul T. Hill The Rand Corporation	What has the era of compensatory education program development contributed to knowledge about achievement in the basic school subjects in urban schools? Where is the evidence? What, if anything, does the evidence indicate about methods for improving basic skills achievement? What, if any, recommendations can be made to school district planners on the basis of existing evidence?

Instructional Ingredients for the Development of Beginning Reading Competence
Isabel Beck
Co-Director
Learning Research and Development Center
University of Pittsburgh

Much research, program development, and implementation of efforts to improve achievement in basic school subjects has been concentrated in the area of reading. What approaches to instruction in reading have been successful in increasing achievement? Is there evidence that certain approaches are best suited to the needs of particular populations? Do these effects generalize to other areas of school learning, such as mathematics, social studies, and science?

A Discussion of The Literature and Issues Related to Effective Schooling
Ronald Edmonds
Director
Center for Urban Studies
Graduate School of Education
Harvard University

Are there schools that have demonstrated a higher degree of effectiveness in the delivery of instruction in the basic school subjects than others serving similar student populations (in terms of socioeconomic backgrounds, family characteristics, minority populations, etc.)? What characteristics distinguish these schools from less successful schools in similar situations? What is the evidence that the explanatory characteristics have been correctly identified, and how strong is that evidence?

The Educational Promise of Cultural Pluralism
Vera John-Steiner and Larry Smith
Department of Educational Foundations
College of Education
The University of New Mexico

How can we approach problems of teaching and learning in urban schools so that the racial and cultural diversity of the school population is recognized, respected, and utilized constructively, to the extent possible? How do we differentiate between basic academic skills, which all students need to acquire for successful participation in our hetergeneous society, and curriculum decisions which can and should be tailored to the needs and interests of different sub-cultural groups? Do students benefit from participation in racially and culturally hetero-geneous classrooms, or perhaps from certain kinds of heterogeneous instructional settings but not others? What is known about these issues, and how much consensus is there about the cultural values on which schooling must be based?

New Perspectives on School District Research and Evaluation Catherine Lyon Center for the Study of Evaluation University of California, Los Angeles	What is the role of research and development processes in improvement of instruction and learning in basic school subjects in large urban systems? In what form are these processes being applied to the teaching and learning process in urban schools? What is the evidence and how solid are the indications that use of these proceses has resulted in improved student achievement?
Effective Teaching and Learning in Urban Schools Jane A. Stallings and Shirley W. Hentzell Stanford Research Institute	Looking specifically at the interaction of student, teacher, curricular and school organization characteristics, what instructional conditions encourage achievement in basic school subjects? What evidence is there, and how good is it? How are the effects of instructional conditions on student achievement measured? On the basis of existing evidence and trends, what recommendations can be made for improving students' instructional environments?
Mathematics and The Urban Child MariLynn Suydam Center for Science, Mathematics, and Environmental Education The Ohio State University	Mathematics is a school subject which is generally considered basic, insofar as mathematical skills are required for successful adult functioning in our complex society. What evidence is there to indicate which approaches to instruction in mathematics have been successful in increasing achievement? Is there evidence that certain approaches are best suited to the needs of particular populations? Do these effects generalize to other areas of school learning, such as reading, social studies, and science?
Basic Skills in Urban Schools: A View From The Bilingual Classroom Concepcion Valadez Graduate School of Education University of California, Los Angeles	Since the second largest minority population served by many urban school districts is a bilingual population, what is the current state of the evidence about the effects of programs developed especially for bilingual students? What, if anything, does the evidence indicate about the effects of such programs on basic skills achievement?

School-Community Relations and The Urban School
Dean Bowles
Director
Home-School-Community Project
Wisconsin Research and Development Center for Cognitive Learning

What do we know or what can we learn about the influence of parental and community involvement in schooling on student achievement? How does parental and community involvement affect the teaching-learning process? If information is not available to answer these questions on even a tentative basis, what types of research are recommended to study this aspect of students' lives more effectively?

Frank Sobol
Basic Skills Group
National Institute of Education

Are there research and development products which have contributed to improved instruction and increased student achievement in basic school subjects in large urban school systems? What is the evident and how solid are the indications that use of these products has resulted in improved student achivement?

A Summary of The Conference Findings
Edmund W. Gordon
Director
Institute for Urban and Minority Education
Teachers College
Columbia University

In light of the evidence produced by examination of these issues, what concrete recommendations can be made to school districts concerning the improvement of instruction and learning in basic school subjects? In light of the same evidence, what research and development agenda should be the focus of future study and program development?

Dr. Francis S. Chase,
Director of Urban Education
Dallas, Texas

Keynote Speaker for Conference Banquet:
"Promising Developments in Urban Education"

--Harriet Doss Willis
Director
Urban Education Program

What Do We Know About Teaching and Learning in Urban Schools: A Summary of the Conference Findings

Edmund W. Gordon
Columbia University

The aim of this paper is to bring some conceptual synthesis to the deliberations of the conference, "What Do We Know About Teaching and Learning in Urban Schools?". In doing so, I shall not try to summarize the fine papers presented at the conference. Rather, I will begin with an effort at bringing definition to the concept of urban education, followed by an identification of some of the critical issues that are related to urban life and education in urban settings. Against this background, I'd like to discuss some of the issues which have emerged in the conference. In identifying these issues, I will be drawing from two sources. Frank Chase talked about the importance of listening for the stimulation of thought, as opposed to listening simply to record ideas. And as I went through the notes I took while listening to the presentations, I found that most of them were not authors' statements, but the ideas that were triggered in me by those authors' statements. So, as I identify issues, some of those issues will be issues that came from papers and discussions, and others will be issues that were stimulated in me as I listened to either the discussion or the papers.

EDMUND W. GORDON was formerly Richard March Hoe Professor of Psychology and Director of the Institute for Urban and Minority Education at Teachers College, Columbia University. He is now Professor of Psychology and Afro-American Studies at Yale University.

One would gather from the emphasis in the several papers and discussions of this conference that we have accepted a rather colloquial conception of urban education. It seems practically synonymous with the education of minority groups or with the education of the underclasses. Studies of urban living and its consequences for education tend to focus on issues that relate to ethnic minority groups or low socioeconomic status. This emphasis is, in a sense, a reflection of the fact that the city is where low-status people are now concentrated. It does not mean that there are not poor people or Black or Spanish-speaking people or Native Americans in less densely populated areas. Prior to 1930 these people were concentrated in more rural areas, and they can still be found scattered all across the country. But the largest concentrations of such people, as well as the largest numbers, are in our cities. For example, in the early part of this century when one wanted to study Black Americans, one tended to go to rural areas. That is because that's where most Black Americans were found. More recently, in the last two decades, investigators concerned with the problems of Blacks had to turn to our great cities to find large concentrations of Black people because of the shift from rural to urban living. Similarly, if one goes into the Native American ghettos of Brooklyn or Chicago, one will find the largest concentration of Native Americans in our nation. In fact, we have more Native Americans in these two cities than in any single reservation in the country. In Los Angeles, in Miami, in New York, and in the cities of the Southwest we find large numbers of persons with Spanish surnames. This population shift has led us to equate urban education with the problems of low-status people. However, there are problems more critical and more crucial to urban life, and certainly more crucially related to the future of our society, than the problems faced by low-status people in our cities.

This is not to demean or underestimate the importance of ethnic discrimination or the importance of poverty in the lives of people; these are tremendously important issues and society must do something about them. Rather, this is to suggest that professionals often greatly confuse the problems of urban education with the problems of special populations. This

confusion may result in a disservice to the low-status populations, to the concerned professions, and to the domains of minority education and urban education by treating the two as if they were synonymous.

The history of the human species has been marked by a continuous movement toward greater congregation. It is toward the concentration of human beings in social collectives that most of the development and history of humans has been oriented. This is readily evidenced by simply tracing the history of the shift from the early food gathering and hunting of hominids to the early collection of so-called primative mammals at food cultivation and eventually at territorial establishment and moving into assemblies of tribes, moving from there to small villages and from there to feudal estates, if not states.

Even the period of slavery in this country and slavery in other parts of the world in earlier times involved the concentration of humans to serve particular purposes. Most of these congregations have been directed toward survival. Unfortunately, most often it has been toward the survival of a select group at the price of a larger group. In the current period, i.e. the latter part of the nineteenth century, certainly the twentieth century, and most particularly the latter part of the twentieth century, these efforts at the concentration of human beings in social collectives have resulted in the concentration of such populations, not only in cities but in metropolitan communities--and not only in metropolitan communities but in metropolitan belts. Back in the East where I come from, if one flies down, say, from Maine to Richmond, Virginia, for example, one sees just a steady stream of light from the outskirts of Boston to Richmond. That is a tremendous metropolitan belt along the East Coast. If one does the same thing over on the West Coast, with the exception of a few intermittent patches of green, from San Francisco down to just south of Los Angeles, again one sees a steady stream of light. These are metropolitan belts, concentrations of people--so much so that suggestions, hopefully facetious, have been made that the nation might tilt into the Atlantic or the Pacific because of the concentrations of people and buildings on these two sides.

One of the crucial conceptions that must be dealt with as we look at that kind of a shift is the fact that we have moved from what was essentially a rural nation to what is essentially an urban nation. We can no longer think of the United States as being dominated by its rural communities. It's dominated by its urban communities so that we come with a concern for a phenomenon that we call urbanicity. And in thinking about the problem of urban education, I am suggesting that urbanicity is a characteristic of our society, and education in that society has to be sensitive and adaptive to the characteristics and features of urbanicity. Even though we may be talking about people who are geographically isolated, the fact of urbanicity forces them to be influenced and even under the control of the characteristics of urban communities.

Urbanicity is not a geographic phenomenon; it is a social, political, and economic phenomenon. Urbanicity as a societal condition is most evident in that more than half of our people live in very close urban areas. The remainder of the population is familiar with and greatly influenced by the urban areas. People in this country, even those in rural areas, no longer live in isolation--probably because of the effects of mass media, technological advances in communication, and certainly the high level of transportation that we have. More and more people of this country have come to share many of the same experiences, to develop similar tastes, and to become familiar with the customs, ideologies, and idiosyncrasies common to the nation and its people as a whole. In other words, these United States have become urbanized. We are essentially an urban nation, despite our birth and rurality.

Abner Cohen, in his book Urban Ethnicity (1974), argues that urban anthropology must begin to take into account the fact that our society has become urbanized. He writes that in both the developed and the developing countries today, the city is but a part of a new nation, an urban state. Economically, politically, demographically, and culturally the city makes no sociological sense unless we study it within that wider context. Urban

anthropology, according to Cohen, is indeed the anthropology of the complex structure of the new nation, the urban state. It is the urban character of the modern nation that makes urbanicity a national state of mind.

This line of thought cannot be limited to anthropology; it is also peculiar to education, which must be considered in that context. We may say then that urban education refers to the teaching and learning transactions peculiar to the complex structure of the new nation, urban state. Teaching and learning in that setting is thus the emerging focus.

There are several characteristics of this new nation, urban state. I'll try to identify a few of them. Urban societies, like all other phenomena, are characterized in general by the paradox of contradiction. Almost every aspect of urban life evinces contradictions, opposing forces existing in dynamic states. For example, with respect to populations and their environments, a prominent characteristic of the urban community is the diversity and similarity of its populations, which are highly diverse, yet are also in many ways similar. There is the problem--or the characteristic--of pluralism and uniformity. The pursuit of multiple concurrent identities, values, goals, and standards is encouraged in the same societies where a single standard exists for certain kinds of achievement and participation--hence, pluralism and uniformity. There is the problem of density and magnitude, not so much opposites as the others I'll be discussing, but critical problems for urbanicity and urban education. They refer to the concentrations of people, just the magnitude and the numbers of people, the bigness of the thing that must be dealt with.

There are the issues that relate to mobility and immobility. Here we refer to geographic mobility and cultural mobility, both tremendously important in planning education. We also refer to social mobility, although to a lesser extent, since despite the fact that geographic and cultural mobility are on the incline, social mobility is on the decline. The opportunities to move from one position to the other in our society have drastically decreased from several decades ago. There are the problems of affluence and poverty.

We talk about this on an individual level--rather close juxtaposition of the very wealthy people and very poor people. However, we also talk about it in terms of the richness of resources and the scarcity of resources, again a prominent juxtaposition.

There are issues that relate to collectivity and anonymity. The press toward collectivity and togetherness exists concurrently with the counter-press toward anonymity. Individuals strive to separate themselves from their environment, yet while doing so get lost in the crowd. There are issues that relate to proximity and isolation. There are issues that relate to rigidity and fluidity. When talking about rigidity and fluidity, again, both an institutional and a personal context must be referred to. The rigidity of the systems that serve diverse populations is prominent in an institutional context. Institutions and systems, by virtue of the populations they serve, must be adaptive, responsive, and flexible. Yet their very character supports the rigidity set down in urban communities characterized by bigness; managed by bureaucracies, that rigidity is reinforced. At the same time, it is in the atmosphere of bigness that fluidity and change become possible. Thus these two counter-forces-- rigidity and fluidity--are mutual promoters. On the personal level, the fact that we as individuals are terribly flexible and adaptable is easily recognized. That's how we strive. But we're also tremendously rigid. If one looks at a phenomenon like smoking, which is a bias of mine, we have got information there that is persuasive enough to convince most of us that smoking is deleterious of our health. But the problem is using that information now to change the behavior. Behavior is rigid. The information is available to us; we lack the flexibility to adopt it. Or in our own practice, the richness of ideas as illustrated in this conference, the richness of ideas available to educational instruction and the narrowness with which we tap that resource of information and technology in application, makes changing things very, very difficult.

The list doesn't end here, but these examples provide a starting point against which we can examine some of the related problems.

Two or three times throughout this conference, our attention has been called to the fact that our papers and discussions have seldom, if ever, addressed problems confronting rural schools. It is possible to talk about rural and urban education in the United States; it is probably only a matter of degree--that is, magnitude or density. The education-related problems of the urban society tend to be generic to our entire society because the society is dominated by urbanicity. So that if in looking down our program, or in listening to the discussions, you say, "Well, why doesn't this apply to rural schools? Why doesn't this apply to suburban schools?" The answer is it does. Then why is it appropriate here? Because we have reached the point in the society where, as we begin to think about human problems, it is hard to distinguish between those problems which are now peculiar to rural people and those problems peculiar to urban people. Thus, discussions of some of these issues should not be too troubling if they seem to be more about education generically than about urbanicity specifically. The fact is that the problems of urban living seem to dominate the society; therefore, they dominate education.

In attempting to place our conference concerns into this frame, we will not have a balanced fit. This is primarily due to the lack of agreement that this conception of urban education is a valid one. I am not sure that most of us who have been worrying about urban education have worried about it in this context. Thus, the congruence between my taxonomy of the characteristics of urbanicity and the concerns of this conference or the concerns of the urban education literature may not be a perfect one. The lack of attention given to this perspective by the educational research literature is another factor which detracts from the adaptability of our concerns to this framework. The fact is that if these characteristics and issues become the agenda for urban education in the future, contributions to that agenda will have to be drawn from far broader sources than educational research and developmental literature.

The process of synthesizing this conference can best be started by analyzing the issue of contradiction. Contradiction has been the source of most of

the modest debates of this conference. For example, we have talked about the contribution of family background to school achievement; we are not in agreeement on this topic. It may not be possible to come to agreement on it because that phenomenon exists in a paradox of contradictions. Certainly, based on different experiences, different characteristics are likely to develop. Certainly, if the settings for those experiences vary, the resultant experiences are likely to be different. Therefore one argues for the contribution that the family, culture, and community--all requiring social experience--make to the behavior characteristics of learners exhibited in the school setting, which also presents a social experience. On the other hand, we advise the schools of their responsibility for making school achievement independent of those characteristics. So, for the purpose of planning educational outcomes, if not educational interventions, we presume family background is irrelevant. That is not considered when talking about a desirable outcome for each youngster.

Another example is the educability of all people. This is fundamentally rooted in the nature/nurture controversy, the contribution of genetic and environmental factors to development. This is an argument that continues to surface for at least two reasons. One is personal and political bias, but the other is that the issue itself is unresolvable. We cannot answer today--and I suspect probably not in the next 50 years--questions of the relative contributions of genetic and environmental factors, because the product of nature and nurture is a result of the interaction betwen them, and we don't have the capacity to do the kind of social and human manipulations that would permit us to definitively determine each variable in that equation. The behavior geneticists tell us that the juxtaposition of these two phenomena present a kind of contradiction. The gene contains the seed of all that I can become, but the environment contains the press, the power to radically change what those genes say I can become. And it is the resolution of the contradiction between these two forces that we see in human behavior, the product of that interaction.

Another issue is that of automaticity and rote learning. What is the

relationship of skill development to competence? Is skill development fundamentally rooted in rote experiences? In our discussions we have at least agreed that one of the conditions necessary for skill development is practice and repetition. The more humane of us like to think that that practice and repetition should not be meaningless; it should not be painful. But there are some of us who feel that learning is not easy, and perhaps it is necessary to suffer some pain at a lower level in order to develop the skills to achieve higher goals. There are contradictions there.

There are other issues that relate to empirical and ethnographic research and to evaluative and expandatory research. We held this discussion in the first days of the conference. In order to generate hypotheses that are to be validated through empirical research, some of us argue for the need to go beyond ethnographic research. The so-called hard sciences that we so often like to emulate spent several hundred years attempting to describe and classify things and to develoop taxonomies before moving into the period of hypotheses testing. In comparison, the social and behavioral sciences are really quite young. The record work reflects this point of view of the people who argue that a lot more description, classification, and taxonomy development is needed before a concentrated effort at validation can be undertaken. Others say that the power of statistical analysis and the sophistication of these devices can greatly help us to understand the phenomena of our world, and that we have to use them. The same point holds true for the people who argue about evaluative and expandatory research. When talking about evaluation that informs policy, we have too often been content to do so solely in terms of effectiveness. The policy makers, however, are not satisfied with knowing if something worked or not; they want to know why it worked, what they ought to repeat and invest a real effort in, what part of it is superfluous, what the unintended consequences are, and how all of these things relate to three other things they are doing. That requires explanation. And when we move over into the area of expandatory evaluative efforts, we're talking about meeting research standards, whether they are ethnographic or empirical. So that the juxtaposition, the contradiction in these two areas, for instance, probably

can't be resolved but can at least be understood. And it is out of this understanding that we recognize that the problem in contradiction is not so much a problem of either/or, of choosing between two or three alternatives. What we must seek to find in most human endeavors is a combination; it is integration, orchestration, and achievement of some dynamic equilibrium, depending upon the values and the purposes that are to be served.

Mao Tse-tung has a little essay on contradiction in which he talks about the fact that the opposite positions in the contradiction are not fixed; that is, they move back and forth. At any one period, one aspect of that contradiction may be in the ascendancy, and at another period, the other aspect of that contradiction is in the ascendancy, and the one that was previously ascending may be descending. As we struggle with contradiction, most human effort is directed toward somehow trying to bring some balance to this situation. In the interest of social justice we try to insure that no particular people are always in the descendancy. In all aspects of our lives, we are constantly trying to balance one thing against the other and sometimes it's a little heavier on one side or the other. There are some situations where the circumstances mandate evaluative questions that ask, Does it work? Hopefully, there will be more opportunities to focus on the question of, Why does it work? There are times when the most important things we can do on a research problem is to describe it, to try to generate some new conception of what we're dealing with. At other times we can try to validate or verify a hypothesis that has been generated out of that kind of careful observation. The question isn't an either/or question as we deal with contradiction; in reality it's a matter of orchestration, of achievement of some kind of dynamic equilibrium. In the pursuit of such equilibrium, most of us would agree that the underlying principle behind those decisions is the achievement of social justice to insure that the least served are the well served, or as they say in medicine, to insure that you first do no harm.

It is when dealing with the question of diversity and similarity that most of this discussion fails. Similarity seems to have dominated our work in

education, while diversity seems to have dominated our talk about our work. We give far more lip service to the question of diversity than we give practical service to it. The keynote address of this conference admonished us to change from a prescriptive to an adaptive or responsive educational treatment. This is particularly important because when we talk about diverse populations, we are talking about somehow matching educational experiences to the characteristics of the populations we serve. This matching, however, is not mechanical and arbitrary, but sensitive, dynamic, flexible matching.

Bob Glaser invested a lot of effort when he began work on individually prescribed instruction. Later on, the Office of Education and the National Institute of Education invested a lot of money in those programs. But Glaser's latest book 1977 is not about individually prescribed instruction. It is about adaptive education. His point is that the variance in human characteristics is so great that it is impossible to adequately prescribe for all of those different expressions of human characteristics. What we can do, though, is insist that the organizations that serve diverse people be adaptive and sensitive to that variance. Hence my endorsement of the emphasis on adaptive or responsive educational treatment. We were reminded that we have a long way to go to meet the needs of cultural diverse populations. But we can at least provide what most people would agree is an adequate education for all of our children.

Back in the 60's, Dr. Wilkerson and I were already writing about the shift over the years in the concept of educability (1966). In earlier periods in history, educability was defined and limited by one's participation or membership either in the religious or the political nobility. It was certainly thought that those groups represented the only educable people. As we moved through the reformation and into the industrial revolution, our conception of who is educable was changed. By the last half of the eighteenth century we had pretty much agreed that most people in this country were educable, with the possible exception of Blacks and Native Americans. As we moved into this century we even discovered that Blacks and Native Americans and a lot of other people are educable. This reconception

was brought about by society's demand for educable persons. As the society's requirements for survival have called for educated people, our notions of educability have changed. They have changed so greatly that in this country at least, we now talk about universal education.

Dr. Wilkerson and I postulated that with the possible exception of about 5% of the school-aged population, all children are educable. Bloom's mastery learning is based on the concept that at least 80% of any class can be raised to a given level of competence. My only objection to this postulation is that other 20%. That's too large a group to write off. Five percent might accurately account for the people who are truly defective in ways that interfere with learning, but 20% seems a little bit too high.

We are now dealing with conceptions of educability that are universal. In the keynote address we were reminded that even though we are unable to be maximally responsive to individual differences, we are presently capable of educating the entire population. Therefore the issue becomes one of intent and commitment.

The conference has devoted a great deal of attention to cultural pluralism and its promise. Nonetheless, our endeavors were insufficiently sensitive to the differential meanings and perceptions of pluralism and opportunity to the learners that we seek to influence. We were reminded that the attribution features--what one feels about the phenomenon--are as important as the objective reality. If fact, the existentialists tell us that for the decision-making process, the attribution is the reality. An individual's perception is the reality that he or she deals with. This fact is vital in educational practice, since a student will respond to his or her perceptions of the teaching rather than to the teacher's intent.

There is an increasingly prominent concern with treatment/trait interaction. If we are concerned with the problems of diverse human populations--the relationship between the characteristics of learners and the treatment that they receive--that interaction certainly becomes a critical one. This is a

very complicated subject. It might be helpful to look at Aptitude and Instructional Methods by Chronbach and Snow (1977), since it provides a comprehensive coverage of the available research on trait/treatment interaction. They conclude with a rather pessimistic view of the contribution that that knowledge base gives to the informing of pedagogy about the way in which treatments can be effectively matched to traits. However, Cronbach and Snow also show a continuing faith in the logic of that paradigm. Even though the empirical evidence doesn't support it, they feel the logic of the paradigm is still compelling. The notion that those characteristics that dominate a student's approach to learning are likely to play a more positive role if the learning experience complements rather than ignores them is basically common sense.

In the work I am currently engaged in, I proceed from the assumption that the reason we find the treatment/trait relationship so small and the body of literature so discouraging at the moment is that we move to the empirical validation of those hypotheses too quickly. There is conceptual work that needs to be done, conceptual work that relates to the pedagogical relevance of human diversity. We do not understand the nature of human diversity well enough to design either the instruments by which to assess the behaviors or the interventions by which to influence those behaviors. In the absence of this understanding, we will probably continue to get relatively low pay-off from the attempts at validation. This doesn't mean that those characteristics are unimportant, nor does it mean that a science of pedagogy could not be built on that possible paradigm.

At several points in the conference we touched upon the education implications of status and functional characteristics. It is necessary to make a distinction at this point. I consider ethnicity, social class, and sex to be status characteristics. In another paper I have argued that their relevance for education has been overestimated. I am much less convinced than I once was that the characteristics of the so-called low-status persons--poor kids, boys as opposed to girls, or Blacks as opposed to Whites--are important considerations in the design of educational interventions. Those status characteristics greatly influence the distribution of resources, the

distribution of opportunities, and access to the system. Therefore, I am not for a moment suggesting that we can forget about race or forget about social class in education, because the kinds and qualities of educational treatments that are available are largely distributed on the basis of those status characteristics. When talking about the more refined development of educational treatments, we have to look to what I call functional characteristics. These relate to cognitive styles, to affect motivation, interest, identity, and sources of identity. The most common illustration of cognitive style has to do with concreteness as opposed to abstractness. Ekstrom, French, & Herman (1976) have come up with some 18 aspects of cognitive function. Another approach to cognitive style is the use of Witkin's field dependent/field independent paradigm (1977), although it has been somewhat overrated in its utility for education.

In the temperament area--the most important work--there is the Thomas, Chess, & Birch work on temperament (1978), in which they describe about 9 different aspects of temperament that are identifiable very early in the life cycle and seem to persist as dominant or at least prominent forces throughout the life of the individual. They began the study with month-old children and their oldest subjects now are about 22. Those characteristics observed in the subjects in those early months of life are still present. There are those youngsters who approach life impulsively as opposed to cautiously, globaly as opposed to minutial; those who habituate fairly easily and have rather consistent written patterns, and those who are always in the midst of chaos. Stella Chess, the child psychiatrist in that group, says that when these different kinds of children come into schools and are all treated the same, or when a parent's primary mode of socialization is at variance with the dominant temperamental trait, a conflict that is likely to result in a behavior learning disorder ensues.

Birch and I collaborated on a study with neonates (1965). On the first and second days of the lives of those kids, we saw what we describe as precursors of temperament. This led us to conclude that when we talk about affective response tendencies, we may be talking about the basic patterning

of the neurologic system that seems dominant throughout the life of the person. If one is trying to design sensitively the educational interventions for such persons, we have somehow got to be sensitive and responsive to that aspect. Very little attention has been given to those areas in the deliberations of this conference. When discussing status we frequently made reference to ethnicity and occasionally to national orgin. We avoided differences in sex and gender. Obviously, sex and gender differences are not limited to urban communities. But if we are talking about the urban society now, I think urban education has to give greater attention to it, if for no other reason than that the law requires that we do.

I surmise that the confusion in this area has resulted from a confusion of the terms sex and gender. When we talk about sex differences we are talking about biological differences. When we talk about gender differences we are talking about socially and culturally assigned role differences. In our work we find almost no evidence that there are any biologic differences between males and females that require special attention in education. We know that women tend to accumulate fat more readily and in different parts of their bodies than men. This seems to be related to a differences in muscular development. We know that men cannot conceive, bear, and deliver children. There may be a few other differences of this sort. However, differences in mathematic ability, differences in conceptual ability, the shift from the early years of girls who outstrip boys to the dropoff in that achievement at the late adolescent and college ages--these are all functions of gender, not biology.

As we begin to think about the development of educational programs for urban communities or for people, we have to be sensitive to the phenomenon of sex and gender differences and their relevance for education. I argue that the gender differences may have high relevance, the sex differences almost none. Even then, the gender differences have little to do with the ways in which males and females learn. They have a lot more to do with the distribution of resources and opportunities.

We were reminded that the desegregation of our schools should have been on the agenda, but was omitted since it is the subject for a conference in itself. I think that the problem is no longer one of integration or even desegregation; rather, it is a problem of status equalization across different reference groups. I am not at all convinced that desegregation is the best way to achieve that. It may be that desegregation and integration are the products of status equalization. Again, if we listen to Wilson (1978), although I'm not quite sure that he is right, class has replaced race as a dominant phenomenon in our society. I wish it were true. I have a lingering conviction that racism continues as a salient negative force in our society. Yet, a case can be made for Wilson's claim that race is declining in its influence and being replaced by class. In fact, my friend and mentor W. B. DuBois, anticipated this shift. Just before he left for Ghana in 1960, he said that he was rethinking his earlier assumption that the problem of the twentieth century was a problem of the color line. He said that he was increasingly persuaded that even when we are capable of dealing with color, we are still going to have to deal with the problem of class and the problem of economic differences between people.

Thus, I think Wilson is probably getting ahead of the evidence. He is talking about a phenomenon that he observes, but it seems to be a phenomenon that is over the horizon rather than one that has actually occurred. Ogbu (1978), on the other hand, argues that caste, and specifically caste status of Black Americans continues to be a terribly important phenomenon in our society; that is, no matter where an individual goes or what an individual does, he or she can't quite get away from the fact of color. I have probably lived as integrated a life, professionally and personally, as any Black in the country, but there is hardly a day in my life that I'm not aware of or reminded that I'm Black. I think that fact of caste does have to be dealt with.

As important as the ethnic question is, it is doubtful that it will be solved simply by our efforts to mix people. What we have to do is to find strategies for manipulating the social environment and developing the

behaviors and attitudes of people that move us toward status equalization. As progress is made on the status equalization side, the problems of desegregation and integration will tend to resolve themselves. That's really a discussion for our conference on desegregation.

Concern crept in for the needs and treatment of handicapped children. As we give increased attention to the differences and functional characteristics of learners, the question of the handicapped will naturally arise. It is impossible to talk about differences in function and not recognize that public schools are for everybody. They are for handicapped people as well as non-handicapped people. A physical, mental, emotional, or sensory handicap is simply one of the ways in which we differ. Unfortunately, for some purposes they have very serious consequences as far as learning is concerned; however, that does not change the responsibility for dealing with them. The decision of whether to deal with them in the context of mainstreaming, isolation, or some combination of the two, is the problem of educational design. But in terms of the assumption of responsibility for the universality of educational opportunity, clearly, handicapped people have just as much a right as Black people, White people, Chicano people, or men or women.

Under functional characteristics we talked about language, but from the narrow perspective of bilingualism. We did not talk about the utility of different symbol systems for individual and group learning and for collective problem-solving. That is a terribly important issue. It has been argued that without competency in the dominant symbol system, one is lost. Others take that assertion and interpret it to mean that other symbol systems are incapable of dealing with complex relationships. Now, those two assertions do not logically follow one from he other. Dell Hymes (1968) argues that there is no language system that he has studied that does not have the capacity for dealing with the intricacies and the complexities of relationships that the so-called advanced languages do. The implication of this is an equality parity of status of these languages not generally afforded in our society. It has repercusions for the ways in which we deal

with them. However, in the almost politically dominated concern for bilingual education, we are not really dealing adequately with the problems of language diversity and their relationships to education.

An entire conference could be devoted to the implications for assessment that flow from population diversity and similarity. We were reminded that there are different purposes for assessment, and that those purposes should influence the nature of the assessment process. My bias is that no purpose should overshadow the pedagogical purposes of assessment. I would even argue that if assessment cannot be brought to serve a pedagogical purpose, then we ought not to invest the money to do it. We debated diagnostic and normative approaches to assessment. There are certainly some situations in which normative approaches to assessment are appropriate. Increasingly, though, the diagnostic functions of testing can be brought to serve some of the same purposes that normative approaches serve. If a choice had to be made between the two I would opt for the diagnostic purpose because it is a more informative device for instruction.

We talked about taking the secrecy and hocus-pocus out of testing. Clearly, if the whole testing industry and its instruments are brought under public scrutiny, the instruments will be improved. Some of them will simply be rejected. The testing industry will then dust off the things that they can and even have developed but keep off the market because they are not economically feasible to use. There are emerging assessment procedures that can better serve the needs of teaching and learning, as a more careful look at Project TORQUE (Hayden, 1976) will reveal. There are also two works worth mentioning because they don't require the development of new technology. They are actually approaches to the utilization of currently available instruments to better serve the informing of instruction.

One is written by a very giften woman who left Germany just before Hitler came to power. She was not Jewish but felt that as a gentile she could not stay in a Germany that was becoming fascist. Her name is Elsa Haeussermann, and when she came to this country she was a teacher of handicapped children.

She devoted her efforts to the diagnosis of educational potential in handicapped children, and subsequently developed an excellent set of procedures using items from standardized tests. She concentrated on the conditions under which each youngster could pass each item, and then took the item and manipulated it, changed it, provided clues, changed the circumstances and motivation until she found some way of bringing the youngster to the point where he or she could master the item. Clearly, there were some items that could not be mastered, but it was only after that very exhaustive assessment that that conclusion was arrived at. Her procedures are very time consuming and I don't recommend the book or the procedures for actual replication. I recommend it for a spirit and approach to assessment, an approach that we have called qualitative since it strives to qualify and understand behavior rather than quantify it. Elsa's life in this country before she retired at 70 was devoted to trying to better inform teachers from test data about what they could do to facilitate the learning of youngsters. The title of her book is Developmental Potential of Preschool Children: An Evaluation of Intellectual, Sensory and Emotional Functioning (1958).

The other investigator, whose last name is Meeker (1973), is from the Midwest. He has been using standardized tests such as the Wexler Bellevue and the Stanford Binet, developing strategies for factor analyzing those data to render qualitative reports rather than quantitative reports on the performance of youngsters. There are developments in testing that can help us move into the direction of making assessment more responsive to the diverse characteristics of our population. It would be good to have a revolution in testing, but we can do a lot without that revolution, as the two investigators mentioned above have demonstrated.

Earlier on in these investigations, we were upset by criticism that we were neglecting learning and concentrating on teaching. But it seems to me that we were merely talking a great deal about the things that we know best, as all of us tend to do. We don't know a great deal about how youngsters learn or the processes by which they learn. We know a great deal more about how we go about trying to influence those processes through teaching and

therefore our attention seems concentrated there. But if we are going to develop testing and teaching that is sensitive to the diverse characteristics of persons, we will have to focus much more sharply on the learning behaviors of youngsters.

Merely by mentioning Skinner's work (1955), I evoke an adverse reaction from the humanists in the audience, despite the fact that I am a humanist. They think that behavior modification is some horrible thing. Nonetheless, some of the theories of the behavior analysis contingency management paradigm that Skinner and his associates pursue are terribly important.

The contingency management paradigm is important, but I would be willing to ignore that for a while if we could concentrate our attention on the behavior-analysis end of it. In order to reinforce appropriately, one must understand the behavior of the person, because all things are not reinforcing to all people. Unless the behavior is analyzed and understood, it is impossible to develop an appropriate reinforcement. This behavioral-analysis portion of that paradigm has been considerably neglected and requires a lot more attention.

Another important issue is that of pluralism and uniformity. Major tension is generated by the need to standardize the curriculum outcomes in a pluralistic society. Some of us worry that youngsters who are born in Mississippi, grow up in St. Louis, work in California, and die in Maine, may be handicapped by the variance in standards across geographic sections of the country. One of our discussants talked about the importance of parent and community control over the curriculum. Suppose a community exists in which the level of sophistication of that population does not make them sensitive to the broader demands for achievement in other settings. Do we permit that community to achieve, to work toward a standard that the rest of the nation knows is inadequate for enabling the participation of its particular denizens in the rest of the nation? The resolution of this conflict presents a dilemma. I believe in local control of education, or at least local influences on education. The involvement of the immediate

consumers in the decision-making process with respect to ultimate goals that reflect their standards and values, the things that they need to survive in the setting without handicaps, must be reconciled with the learner's opportunity to move in a variety of other settings.

Related to the question of local control is the imposition of so-called middle-class standards on low-income or poor kids. When one raises the question of middle-class standards, one is usually baiting the issue. Some of us are now talking about survival competencies, and it is true that in modern technological societies many of the things that the middle-class strives for in education are at least assumed to be essential for success in that mainstream. Somehow we have got to find ways of moving toward agreement on sets of standards for educational outcomes that do not limit the alternatives of any persons in the population. It seems to me that the fundamental criteria by which to judge educational goals ought to be whether they expand or limit the options of the person. If it limits the options, it limits future choices, the goal is detrimental and counterproductive and should be rejected. If it opens up those options, expands the range of future choices, the goal should be adopted and fostered.

To answer the question that I used to get baited on--whether to impose educational standards on the little slum boy--I would say that if he's my responsiblity then I would insist on it. My professional responsibility to him is to expand the options rather than to let him or the society constrict those options. So this issue of somehow working toward standards for curriculum outcomes in a pluralistic society needs a great deal more discussion than we have given it in this conference.

There are several goals that fulfill my conception of education. On the top of my list is the achievement of the capacity for affiliation and compassion. The seond is a concern for aesthetics and value appreciation. And if I had to choose between those two, I would probably favor helping youngsters to learn how to examine the values and to make value choices, although as we think about the world to come when we are going to have far more time to be

bored, the development of aesthetic appreciation becomes increasingly important.

Another education aim is the manipulation of symbols: verbal, graphic, and electronic. Rachel Weddington has reminded us throughout the conference that we need to think about the possibility that with the advanced electronic technology other ways of acquiring information are coming into being. Personally, I like the independence that being able to read gives me; it lets me handle the medium for myself, even when the machine breaks down, but I think Rachel has a point. Education needs to begin to think about a more effective utilization of the capacity of electronic technology to help us solve some of the problems of simple manipulation. Information processes have a relevance on problem-solving skills. One that I like is generating, ordering, and discovering meaning. Another is comprehension, systematizing things, even bringing some order to one's life. And the last one is self and interpersonal management and satisfaction.

We gave considerable attention in two or three of our discussions to what works in the pursuit of these goals. We concerned ourselves with effective teaching and learning, and with those settings, practices, and behaviors associated with them. The discussions of math and reading curricula were certainly on target. Again, we could almost devote conferences to both of these areas.

One question that we did not deal with thoroughly is whether or not affective and cognitive development can be accomplished in the same settings and with the same devices. I am always troubled when we try to separate affective and cognitive development. Ted Sizer (1973) has a book called Places of Learning and Places of Joy, where he proceeds from the assumption that all learning cannot always be pleasant. There are some things that have to be learned that we may not always be able to provide joyful opportunities for; some other things have to be learned that are very joyful, satisfying, soul stimulating, etc. His proposal is that we simply establish two kinds of institutions. In fact, his proposal is a possible solution to

the problem I raised about the differential standards in the pluralistic society. He would make the places of learning standardized, and he would make the places of joy idiosyncratic to the communities and populations that they serve.

Another area that received very fleeting attention is pupil advocacy and accountability. Certainly, as we move into more diverse and more complex societies, somebody, or some system has to be created to better protect the interests of learners. In one of the discussions the idea struck me that administrators almost always have dual responsibilities. One is to protect the people that are being served, but in actuality what they are rewarded for is protecting the institutions they are employed to run. Somebody is needed in these institutions who has as the primary, or even the sole responsibility of protecting the interests of the persons who are being served.

James H. Martin has a book that he calls Free to Learn (1972). In it he has a chapter in which he poses a reorganization of the guidance services to establish a comprehensive child development and evaluation center. This center would assume responsibility for the planning of the youngsters' educational experiences, and communicate that to the school, monitor it, and ultimately make the accountability judgment about how well the school has implemented it. The system he proposes has to be independent of the school system, possibly under the responsibility of a panel served by judges or similar officers. There are several problems in taking that kind of function out of the school system. One is the problem of interphase. It is an area of concern that we have not given sufficient attention to. As the societies and systems become larger and more complex, who is responsible for guaranteeing that no individual gets lost in that system?

Finally, there is the question of resources, affluence, and scarcity. The central issue here has to do with the distribution of resources, power, and control. The first problem I call attention to has to do with financing the complex of educational resources in periods of declining fiscal resources,

and the erosion of support for public education. If we don't begin to focus our attention on financing public education, particularly in a period of dwindling resources, we won't have public schools to work in. And there are certainly problems of intent and commitment. The problem is not simply a question of taxation.

Proposition Thirteen on the West Coast is certainly a threat to us, but it is a somewhat misplaced concern. Rather, the problem is related to a declining economy. As we look at the world economy, we see economic conditions in this country are radically changing--and for the worse in terms of the affluence that we have enjoyed in the past. One of the problems we are facing now is the huge reservoir of U.S. dollars in Europe and Japan. Some people are suggesting that that problem is so serious that the only way to deal with it is to issue new currency at a lower value. If such a thing were to happen, and if something is not done to regulate what we call multi-national cooperations, which take vast sums of money and job opportunities out of the country and deprive the nation of tremendous amounts of tax monies, I think the pool of financial resources that we have to deal with is going to be too limited to do the kinds of things our research, judgment, and humane feelings tell us ought to be done to schooling. These are political and economic questions, but I don't think we can worry about education and urban community education at all without focusing on them. And, again, it is such a broad and important issue that the confines of this paper cannot do it justice.

One issue that came up briefly is the intrusion of organized labor concerns and tactics into the educational service, delivery, and policy decisions of public education. I used to be an avid supporter of the union movement, but in New York City I have seen teacher unions become not progressive but reactionary forces--forces that are concerned primarily with protecting the interests of workers and losing all concern for the youngsters that they serve. The intrusion of that movement into education in some cities is so pervasive that in New York, for instance, an educational policy decision cannot be made without checking it out with Al Schenker, the president of

the union. The law says that educational policy making is in the hands of the board. But, in fact, it has shifted to the union. I think somehow we have got to find a way to deal with that kind of problem.

Then there is the problem of institutional resource utilization, decision-making--how are the decisions made about the distribution of the resources? We touched upon that when talking about the more appropriate uses of the research and evaluation data. There are problems that relate to the utilization of the total urban environment--an idea that was raised in our keynote address. Education involves more than schools, and as the resources for education decline, we have got to find more effective ways of using libraries, museums, industry, commerce, parks, families, churches, and everything that is a source of education. We have got to worry about problems of coordinating that total community in education. We have got to worry about the problems of personal resource utilization.

I have already talked about the issue of rigidity. How do we change the behaviors of people in ways that make better use of the vast number of resources that we have available to us? We have problems that relate to legislative and judicial resolution of educational issues. The desegregation decision, for example, was a powerful force on education, and one that I welcomed because it served many of my purposes. However, I am not sure that educational decisions are being made in Congress. I am not sure that Congress knows enough about education to make educational policy decisions. For example, the issue of the handicapped is a terribly complicated problem for educators. Legislators dictate that it has to be done in a certain way; educators have to somehow try to implement that. The issue of sex differences is another example. We have legislation on sex differences. Again, I welcome and must declare myself in favor of the Equal Rights Amendment as it relates to sex differences. But decisions that relate to the way in which that act of justice gets translated into education belongs in educational circles, not in the courts.

There is a relationship between school and community, and we talked about an

achievement model, a legitimacy model, and policy and instructional change models. I am not sure that we have the privilege of choosing between these. I think we simply have to be concerned with all three of those items. But legitimacy may be the most crucial concern, because if the schools cannot achieve legitimacy in their own community, they are not going to achieve change and they are not going to influence achievement to any great extent.

Let me conclude with a paraphrase of a quotation I used to use when I first started talking about this subject. It was from an educator named Joseph K. Hart (1951). He said something like this--that the problem of education in a democratic society is not primarily a problem of teaching and learning; it is a problem of creating conditions under which children cannot help but grow in wholesomeness, in competence, in compassion, in self-confidence, and in commitment to humane values. Hart says no school can accomplish all that. Nothing but a community can.

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